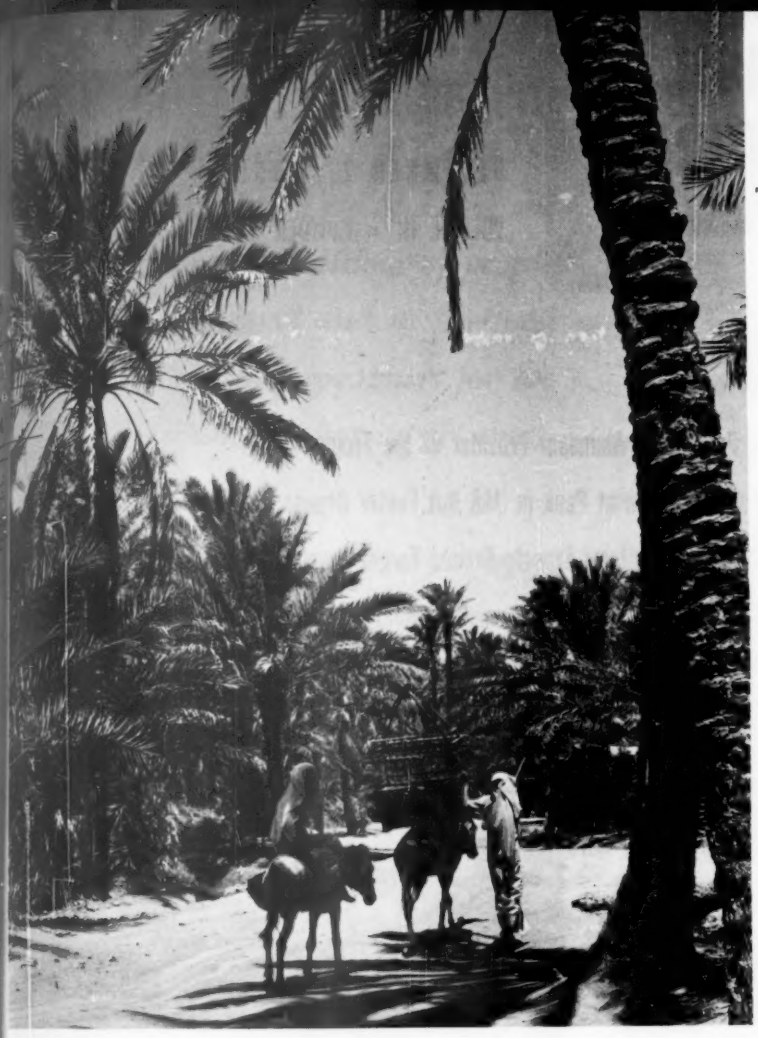

DECEMBER 27, 1965

THE PALM TREE: ABUNDANT PROVIDER OF THE TROPICS

MAINE PROMOTES ITS FARM PRODUCTS AROUND THE WORLD

FOREIGN AGRICULTURE INDEX FOR 1965

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Including FOREIGN CROPS AND MARKETS

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DECEMBER 27, 1965

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Dates flourish at Qatif, green oasis in Saudi Arabia's sandy desert. Article on opposite page points to the importance of the palm tree in the life and economies of many countries.

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The Palm Tree: Abundant Provider of the Tropics

Called the "Tree of Life," the palm supplies millions of people with a livelihood and its products are big money-earners for the countries that export them.

Coconuts in Malaysia are cultivated on huge plantations like the one pictured above where a worker is harvesting nuts with a long pole. Many of these estates have been turned over to oil palm, with much higher yield per acre.

Few classifications of plant life can match the palm tree for its wide variety of products and its economic value to the countries in which it is grown. But while there are some 4,000 types of palms, only three are of really great commercial importance—the coconut, date, and the oil palm. In 1963 foreign shipments of oils, palm kernels, coconuts, dates, and other products amounted to more than $530 million in income for exporting countries.

The majority of these dollar-earning palm products enter foreign trade as oils or oilseeds, and the 2,435,000 short tons of coconut, coconut oil, palm kernel oil, and palm oil exported in 1964 accounted for 23 percent of the fats and oils moving in world markets that year.

Tropical countries, where palm trees abound, have found the tree a source of the basic necessities of life and use parts of it for matting, ropes, brushes, timber, and even vinegar and wine. Quantities of palm oil and kernels as well are consumed locally: in 1964 nearly half the palm products harvested were sold in the country of origin.

One tree—two oils

Both palm oil and palm kernel oil come from the oil palm, one of the world's most efficient producers of vegetable oil. This palm is found mainly along a 200- to 300-mile coastal strip in Western Africa, and the bulk of the valuable oil crop is processed from fruits harvested from trees growing wild.

The crushed pulp of the fruit produces palm oil while the kernel inside the nut crushes into palm kernel oil. Although different in their properties, the two oils have similar uses and figure importantly in manufacture of soap, margarine, and shortening. They are better sources of vitamin A than cod liver oil.

Nigeria is the world's largest supplier of palm kernels, and second only to the Congo (Leopoldville) as an exporter of palm oil. In 1964 Nigeria shipped 213,200 short tons of oil and kernels (oil equivalent), more than half the world's exports of those products. Sierra Leone, Dahomey, and the Congo also export large quantities of kernel oil.

In the Congo the oil palm industry is more highly developed than in the other African countries. Palm fruits and kernels from large plantations are crushed in modern mills, accounting for the Congo's undisputed leadership in the production and shipping of palm oil. Oil exports earned almost $40 million for the Congo in 1963.

The oil palm is also cultivated commercially on a large scale in southeast Asia. Both Malaysia and Indonesia are important exporters of palm oil and cultivate their palms on estates. Rubber and coconut plantations in Malaysia have reportedly been turned over to oil palm, and on some large well-drained estates yield has reached one and a half tons per acre—the highest in the world.

Coconut palm most valuable

The coconut palm is commercially the most valuable, and on the whole more carefully cultivated than the oil palm Its need for consistently high temperatures and ample rainfall restricts its growth to a narrow band of islands and coastal regions in the tropics.

Chief commercial products from the nut are copra (the dried kernel) and coconut oil, extracted from the copra.

Coconut oil, like palm oil, is used in manufacturing soap and detergents, and in the production of margarine. Another product from this very versatile palm is coir, the tough durable fiber from the coconut husk. India and Ceylon find it commercially important for brooms, ropes and fishnets. Even the flowering sheath of the coconut palm is useful; its fermented sap is a liquor called toddy.

World production and trade in copra and coconut oil is dominated by the Philippines, with only Indonesia and Ceylon exporting in any significant quantity. Coconut palm products rank fourth in production in the Philippines (after rice, tea, and meat) but are first in export value: shipments leaving the islands in 1963 brought in $50 million. Because of its importance as a cash crop, the cultivation of coconut palms has been encouraged by grants and loans to producers for further plantings and improved cultivation. Philippine authorities estimate that output by 1970 would be 2-3 million tons, and even with increased local consumption about half of this would be available for export.

Coconut production in Ceylon, the world's second largest exporter, has been guided by the Coconut Rehabilitation Scheme started in 1956. The Ceylonese Government is encouraging higher levels of productivity by replanting old trees and distributing fertilizer at a subsidized rate. Ceylon exported 121,700 short tons of coconut products in 1963, for a total of $8,240,000.

Indonesia's copra production has been troubled with aging trees, low prices, and internal problems, and as a result, the country exported only 113,300 short tons in 1963. Trade in Indonesia is carefully controlled, and most of the copra and coconut oil processed goes for domestic consumption. African producers are Kenya, Tanganyika, and Nigeria, and all of them put their coconut products into foreign markets. In Mexico and Central America production is primarily for domestic use.

Babassu, tucum, and cohune oils are pressed from the nuts of some South American species and used for food processing and soap manufacturing.

Date palms, which yield an edible fruit worth about $35 million in exports annually, will grow throughout the tropics. However, only in favorable areas when pollinated by man will they bloom and ripen fruit. Over one-third of the dates of the world are cultivated in Iraq, but Iran, Saudi Arabia, the countries of northern Africa, and even the United States grow them for commercial purposes.

Iraq controls about 80 percent of the world date trade—344,651 metric tons in 1963—and Iran (9 percent) is the only other substantial exporter. Although most exports consist of mature, edible dates, in recent years some dates of poorer quality have gone into foreign trade for date juice. Dates are used domestically in various ripening stages for eating, animal feed, syrup, alcohol, sugar, and vinegar.

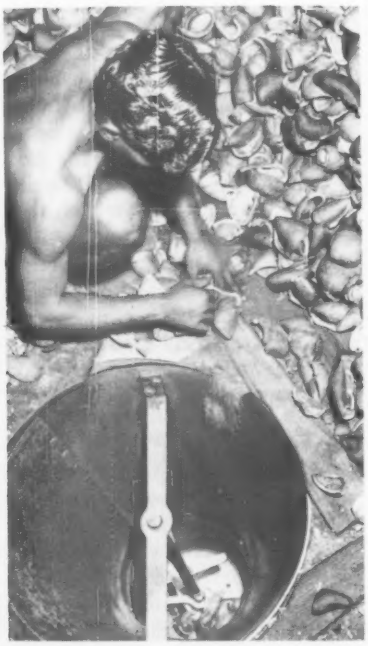
Variety in species and uses

Although the oil, date, and coconut palms are most important economically, thousands of other species of the palm tree are cultivated and used in unique and often profitable ways.

A variety of palms provide commercially useful vegetable fibers in their stems. Crin vegetal, sometimes called vegetable horse hair, comes from a dwarf fan-palm that grows in northern Africa and is used in mattresses and upholstery. Piassava fibers are from the leaf stems of a variety of palms native to Brazil, Venezuela, and western Africa, and are used in ropes and strong brushes.

India exports about 5 million pounds of palmyra fiber annually. The fiber comes from a fan-shaped palm also found in Ceylon, Burma, and Africa.

The carnauba palm growing in the interior rainforests of Brazil produces large quantities of wax on its leaves which is scraped off and used to make phonograph records, polishes, and carbon paper. Vegetable ivory comes from the tagua palm of Colombia and Venezuela; buttons are cut from the very hard seed.



Left to right: loading oil palm fruit into trucks for delivery to Malaysian processing plant; worker feeds copra into a grater; merchant displays dates in marketplace of leading exporter, Iraq.

Farm Production at Peak in UAR But Faster Growth Needed

For the fourth successive year, agricultural production in the United Arab Republic (Egypt) has mounted to an alltime record. The gains during 1965 and the previous 3 years, however, have failed to match burgeoning consumer needs, and the country remains in the grip of a deepening balance-of-payments deficit.

Most spectacular change in the farm picture this year has been the addition of hundreds of acres of newly irrigated land to production. Though not yet producing at as high a level as older farming regions, these lands have made possible a total production rise of 6 percent, including good gains in the three major money earners—cotton, rice, and onions—and in many other crops.

Growth in export crops

Production of cotton—leading cash crop for more than 150 years—advanced 8 percent to 544,000 metric tons. Acreage jumped 17 percent to 1.95 million acres, but average yields were off sharply.

Only grain to show any notable increase was rice, which continued its phenomenal growth of the past decade by rising some 265,000 metric tons above 1964 production of 2,035,000. The commercial value of rice is pointed up by the vast amount of new land—some 200,000 or more acres—devoted to it between 1964 and 1965 alone.

Production of onions is also believed to have risen—to around 700,000 metric tons from 650,000 in 1964. Encouraged by generally high earnings, Egyptian onion growers have more than doubled their output during the past decade.

Also experiencing growth this year were cottonseed and other oilseeds, vegetables, sugarcane, and citrus. In addition, production of plants used in pharmacy and cosmetics is believed to have surpassed that of 1964. Items in this category—senna, henna, candellia wax, geranium oil, lime oil, rose oil, jasmine paste, mint oil, and orange oil—have been receiving increased attention because of their export value.

The United Arab Republic still lacks a viable livestock industry, with this sector showing little overall change from 1964. A 46,000-head decline in cattle numbers counterbalanced the small gain in sheep and goat numbers and the slight improvement in yield per animal.

Farm exports to increase

The good returns from Egypt's major commercial crops should help boost its agricultural exports during the 1965-66 marketing season.

Cotton exports, for instance, could total close to 1.8 million bales, or 16 percent above 1964-65 (August-July) exports and 31 percent above 1963-64's. Shipments during 1964-65 went largely to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, which together took 60 percent. Next biggest market, the EEC bought 16 percent less than in the previous year.

As in the past, cotton accounts for the largest portion of Egypt's exports, though its 1964 share of the total was down to around 63 percent from close to 90 percent 15 years ago.

At the same time, there has been a marked increase in shipments of rice, now one of the country's most profitable crops and second largest export. Shipments of rice in 1965-66 (November-October) are expected to exceed the record 531,000 metric tons of 1963-64. Though the United Arab Republic has not established any traditional rice markets, in the past it has sent rice to several of the Asian nations, Cuba, and the EEC.

Sales of onions—third biggest export—are also expected to be large—around 200,000 tons in 1965-66 or 15 percent above the 1958-61 annual average. Most of the shipments continue to go to Western Europe, though the UAR's unrealistic pricing lost some of this area's trade in 1964-65. Eastern Europe, the USSR, and Cuba are also gaining in importance as markets for onions.

In addition, earnings from other agricultural exports and from the Suez Canal and tourism will be up.

Imports also rise

Egypt's success in increasing agricultural exports is far overshadowed by its spiraling import needs, which since 1960 have caused imports to nearly double. (Exports in this period climbed a mere 20 percent.) This trade problem is further complicated by the country's long-term commitment to export large quantities of cotton to the USSR—a commitment which has deprived the UAR of considerable foreign exchange.

Large imports of U.S. agricultural products under Title I of Public Law 480 have served to ease somewhat Egypt's trade difficulties. Since inception of the P.L. 480 program in 1954, the United States has shipped the UAR nearly $650 million worth of farm products under that program.

Although complete data are not yet available, total agricultural imports by the UAR in 1965 probably rose to over $300 million from $280 million in 1963. Generally wheat and wheat flour from the United States account for far the largest portion, with the United States exporting more wheat flour to the UAR than to any other foreign nation. These and other imports from the United States—including corn, vegetable oils, meat and meat products, tallow, and tobacco—generally account for about two-thirds or more of Egypt's total agricultural imports.

Agricultural expansion stressed

Major expansion program now underway in Egypt is the Aswan High Dam, which when completed in 1970 will add 1.5 million acres to agricultural production. At the same time, work continues on land reclamation in the Western Desert and along the Mediterranean west of Alexandria, projects to tap underground water, and programs to increase yields on some 700,000 acres. In connection with these programs, the government is stressing production and/or imports of farm machinery, nitrogen fertilizer, seed, and pesticides. (Consumption of nitrogen fertilizer is now approaching 200,000 metric tons annually, about half of which is produced domestically.)

Efforts toward increasing yields are of special importance to the economy of Egypt, as the acreage addition to come with completion of the Aswan High Dam will be largely absorbed by increased consumer demand, unless the present rate of population growth can be checked. With over 60 percent of its people still dependent on agriculture as a livelihood and just as large a percentage of its national wealth in this sector, Egypt recognizes that it can hardly afford for its agriculture to just keep pace.

Turkey's Agricultural Exports Exceed Target Level in 1964-65

Record or near-record sales of Turkey's principal agricultural commodities pushed the value of its 1964-65 agricultural exports—at $337 million—beyond the expected level. Exports for the calendar year 1965, originally planned at $325 million, could reach $335 million, making this the second year in a row that targets were exceeded.

In the first 6 months of 1965, agricultural exports—valued at $125 million—were up 20 percent from the comparable period of 1964. The export value of cotton was up 30 percent, with unit prices holding steady. For raisins and cattle, both quantities exported and unit prices were higher than in the first half of 1964, while greater exports of tobacco, filberts, and oranges more than offset reduced unit prices for these commodities.

High cotton, sugar, tobacco, and nut stocks, combined with good 1965 fig and raisin crops, should permit total exports for the second half of 1965 to equal or exceed those of the same period last year.

Diversifies export markets

Turkey's chief markets for agricultural products are the Common Market, about 33 percent; the United States, about 20 percent; and the European Free Trade Area, 20 percent. With exports to these markets showing no increases, the rise in agricultural exports during January-June 1965 indicates that Turkey must be turning to previously unimportant markets, especially in the Middle East.

The value of Turkey's agricultural imports during the first 8 months of 1965 was running at about the same level as in calendar 1964. Although purchases of industrial raw materials, principally vegetable oils and tallow, were down substantially, the value of cereal imports more than tripled that of the entire year 1964. Agricultural imports—two-thirds of which in January-August 1965 were under P.L. 480—constitute less than 10 percent of total imports.

Wheat production meets consumption

Growing conditions during 1965 were generally more favorable for grains than in the previous year. Wheat and barley production are estimated at 6-10 percent above the 1964 level, and domestic wheat production should cover consumption requirements. Rice output recovered from its substantial decline in 1964, and production of other grains was about the same as last year.

Yields of other annual crops—notably cotton, sugarbeets, and potatoes—declined in 1965. An increase in the area sown to pulses was prompted by the relatively high 1964 prices, but prices to date have been weak and could adversely affect 1966 acreage. Primarily because of reduced cotton area and yield, oilseed output was about 5 percent below that of 1964. However, vegetable oil output during 1965-66 is expected to be about the same as in 1964-65 because of increases in the sunflowerseed extraction rate and the oilseed production-crushing ratio.

Industrial crop output drops

Production of industrial crops suffered the largest declines from record 1964 outputs, but were considerably above average. For instance, the cotton harvest, according to estimates, is the second largest on record, and sugarbeet output is the third largest.

The 1965 olive crop was the second smallest in 8 years. However, because of abnormally high beginning stocks—following a record 1964 harvest—domestic consumption will be maintained, and exports will not be severely reduced.

Among livestock, sheep numbers are believed to have risen in 1965, but not as much as in the previous year. Little change is expected in the cattle herd, and goat numbers are expected to continue their downward trend. A combination of better prices and reduced nongrain feedstuffs should bring the increase in sheep and cattle slaughter to about 9 percent, with a reduction in slaughter weights likely. Total meat production should rise by about 5 percent, while sheep and cattle exports to other Middle Eastern countries should also increase some.

Following the trend of recent years, both chicken numbers and egg production are forecast up in 1965. Turkey numbers are also expected to have increased, reversing the recent downward trend. A higher milk-production level is anticipated as the number of dairy cattle continues to rise.

—Dispatch from WILLIAM L. DAVIS, JR.
Assistant U.S. Agricultural Attaché, Ankara

Soviet State Reiterates Its Encouragement of Private Farm Plots

The Council of Ministers of the Russian Federation (RSFSR) has passed a new decree concerning the implementation of last year's decree of November 13 that dealt with the removal of "groundless restrictions" on the private plots of collective farmers and workers.

The new decree, as reported in *Selskaya Zhizn*, November 4, 1965, notes that the previous decree met widespread approval of workers, that numbers of livestock in private holdings on October 1 had increased over that of last year, and that increased production on the private plots had increased food supplies on the collective markets, but that numerous complaints show that real deficiencies remain. The decree then goes on to enumerate a revealing series of problems, noting that complaints are especially numerous from Kalinin, Kursk, Ryazan, Moscow, Smolensk, and some other oblasts.

Some of the major enumerated deficiencies are as follows:

- The provisions of the previous decree still haven't been explained to the population by many rayon organs, nor have the changes been discussed or implemented at collective farm meetings on many farms.
- Plot sizes haven't been restored in many areas and, in fact, are still being decreased for older farmers, single individuals, pensioners, and others; on the other hand, some individuals have taken plot sizes and acquired livestock above the established norms.
- Many farms haven't rendered the necessary aid in working plots and providing pasture and feeds—especially serious when hay lands not suitable for mechanized harvest are not harvested either for socialized livestock or for private livestock.

• Some farms have established obligations to individuals for sales to state of meat, milk, eggs, wool, etc., and have withheld use of pastures and meadows from those who don't meet the obligations.

• Aid to individuals in marketing their surplus production is not rendered, and some local organs impede marketing outside of the oblast.

• Consumer cooperative organizations aren't providing the needed quantity of hand tools.

• Fruit and berry markets are inadequately producing seedlings for sale to the population; also, vegetable seed needs are not met.

• In a number of places, government and agricultural organs do not pay proper attention to the complaints coming to them.

Requirements stated explicitly

The new decree contains several measures intended to eliminate these problems. Briefly it—

Requires the Ministry of Agriculture RSFSR government organs at the various subrepublic levels, agricultural production administrations, and state farms to take measures to liquidate the noted deficiencies; to organize discussion of the decree where it has not yet been discussed; to check in each state farm the implementation of the decree; and to see that each conscientious collective farmer and worker receives aid in working his plot (at actual cost), acquiring cattle, feed, and pasture, and help in marketing surplus output.

Condemns illegal establishment to the population of obligations for sales to the state of agricultural products produced in the private sector, and requires government organs at the various subrepublic levels to better the work of procurement organizations in purchasing products from the individuals on a voluntary basis.

Requires the Ministry of Agriculture RSFSR to arrange for sales of the needed vegetable seeds through the Russian organization, *Sortsemovoshch,* and also to provide for the needed fruit and berry seedlings.

Requires the Ministry of Agriculture also to organize at incubator poultry-raising stations the hatching and sale of baby chicks to the population.

Instructs the Ministry of Trade RSFSR and *Rospotrebsoyuz* (Consumer Cooperative Organization RSFSR), jointly with local organs, to arrange the sale to the population of concentrated feeds and the needed hand tools. Gosplan (State Planning Commission RSFSR) is instructed to include targets for hand tool production in the economic plan.

Requires local government and agricultural organs to pay careful attention to complaints and letters of workers.

Requires government organs of autonomous republics, krays, and oblasts to cooperate with industrial enterprises in improving existing, and organizing new, private plots on state lands and other developed lands.

This decree by the Council of Ministers of the largest Soviet Republic appears to indicate that although many local officials paid little attention to last year's easing of restrictions, nevertheless the state is in earnest that these measures be implemented.

Italy Reaps Good Wheat Crop in 1965, But Corn Output Declines

Despite a big reduction in the area sown to wheat, Italy's 1965 crop was the largest since 1958. However, production of corn—the country's other major grain—dipped to 13 percent below the 1964 level, with excessive precipitation contributing to a low-quality crop.

Latest official estimates place the wheat crop at about 9.8 million metric tons—up 14 percent from the previous year's outturn. At 10.6 million acres, the area sown to wheat was 291,000 acres below that of 1964. The increase in yield—from about 29 to 34 bushels per acre—was primarily the result of greater fertilizer use, improved farming practices, and favorable growing weather.

Higher acreage expected

Because of wheat's recent firm price levels, its low production cost, and the favorable weather conditions for sowing the 1966 crop, the Italian Ministry of Agriculture is expected to encourage farmers to shift some forage acreage into wheat in 1966. Consequently, wheat area in 1965-66 will probably increase by about 500,000 to 750,000 acres, especially in major durum-producing areas in the south.

Imports of soft wheat in April-June 1965 were almost double those of the same period in 1964, and imports of durum had almost quadrupled. For the 1965-66 marketing year (July-June), imports are estimated at 300,000 metric tons, compared with 710,000 in the previous year, and exports are estimated at 350,000 tons.

A cold spring in the Po Valley—Italy's corn belt—followed by a drought also covering the Marche Region of central Italy—another important corn area—was primarily responsible for the drop in the 1965 crop. Furthermore, excessive rainfall and hail storms in the north in September and early October hindered harvest operations and raised the moisture content in the grain. Reportedly, northern farmers are tempted to dispose of their crops as quickly as possible for fear of risking heavy losses if the moist corn were stored.

Corn imports at record high

Imports of yellow corn in the 1965-66 marketing year are estimated at a record 5 million metric tons, with the United States and Argentina principal suppliers. Exports in April-June 1965 were 6½ times above those of the same period of 1964 and went almost entirely to France and West Germany. In September, this export trade began to taper off and apparently has come to a near halt.

As a result of Italy's highly successful lean-pork campaign last spring, increased pork consumption should lead to greater use of feed grains by the hog industry—an indication of higher import requirements. Because of a price differential of about $13 per ton favoring U.S. corn over that from Argentina, Italy will probably expand its purchases of U.S. No. 2 corn until April 1966.

In October, the Minister of Agriculture announced a corn price increase of about $11.20 per metric ton in 1967, bringing the corn target price to about $80 per metric ton in 1967 and $80.64 in 1968. This incentive will probably induce farmers to shift some of their wheat acreage into corn in the near future.

—Dispatch from DANIEL SHEPPARD
Assistant U.S. Agricultural Attaché, Rome

Maine Promotes Its Farm Products Around the World by Ship

The 14,000-ton *State of Maine*—originally a luxury liner on the New York-to-Panama run and then a troop carrier during World War II—will sail to Latin America January 4 to promote Maine agricultural exports.

Although its primary mission on cruises is to train midshipmen of the Maine Maritime Academy, the *Maine* also carries an exhibit of specialty foods produced in Maine and exported to the value of over $10 million annually.

This makes the third cruise in which the Maine Department of Agriculture has cooperated with the Academy as part of a 3-year-old program to boost foreign sales of State farm products. Last winter, the *Maine* stopped at 8 ports in Portugal and Spain, and in 1963, at 10 in the Caribbean.

Broadened market base

The project is part of MDA's effort to broaden the market base for State exports. "Key to maintaining high export levels is foremost the cultivation of new markets and the expansion of now insignificant ones," says H. G. Hawes who heads up the foreign market development program at MDA.

One of the chief goals in Latin America is opening new outlets for McIntosh apples, of which Maine is the leading U.S. producer. The State currently depends on the United Kingdom and Scandinavia for about 90 percent of its 120,000-bushel apple exports. Maine has been exporting apples since 1826.

Maine frozen poultry, with 1964 exports at a record 8 million pounds, is another product MDA is seeking wider markets for.

Increased export effort

"Though Maine poultry sales to West Germany have been curtailed by Common Market regulations," Mr. Hawes said, "our poultry industry may in the long run benefit because of increased effort invested in developing new markets." He believes that the greatest potential for the State's export expansion lies in poultry and livestock, but that a concerted effort is needed to convince foreign buyers that unrealistic health regulations and high import duties hurt their consumers more than they help their poultry producers.

Last year's promotional cruise to Spain was a step in this direction. The trade contacts made at that time should help Maine poultry benefit from any action taken by Spain to make its market more open to poultry imports as its consumption grows, according to Mr. Hawes.

Besides apples and poultry, MDA is promoting in Latin America french-fried potatoes (the State leads the nation in production of Aroostook potatoes), processed corn, and blueberries (Maine produces 90 percent of the low-bush variety), Boston baked beans, and livestock, primarily Holstein breeding cattle.

Weeks before the vessel arrives at ports in Puerto Rico, the Canal Zone, Chile, and Peru, MDA representatives will have personally invited importers, members of the hotel and institutional trade, food chain store buyers and other clientele, and government officials to inspect the onboard displays. To gain added publicity, press conferences are held, and the public on certain days may take guided tours through the *State of Maine*.

Business buffets

Probably the most unusual feature of the promotion—one that invariably brings in orders for Maine

Left to right: The Maine *steams into a Caribbean port 2 years ago on a joint training and product promotion cruise; in Valencia, Spain, last year, a crowd approaches the ship's gangplank; in the* Maine's *lounge, canned products are displayed at a buffet for importers and government officials at Lisbon.*

foods—is the buffet reception for prospective buyers, featuring the products on exhibit. (For a single cruise, the cost to present the buffets is similar to that of participation in an overseas trade fair, Mr. Hawes noted.)

"The real success of these ventures," he said, "depends on effective followup of trade contacts by Maine exporters and businessmen through personal visits to these countries. We encourage businessmen to accompany the *Maine* on these trips: five tradesmen, for example, were on hand for the Caribbean cruise and several are participating in the current Latin American trip."

Initial trade contacts

MDA's primary function in market development is to open up trade opportunities. It is the responsibility of private industry to follow up these leads, Mr. Hawes pointed out.

The department first took an interest in export expansion in 1962 when its Division of Plant and Industry launched an investigation of the impediments to its export trade in potatoes, chiefly phyto-sanitary regulations. The division director and a USDA plant scientist went to key importing areas to exchange technical information. Later certain countries relaxed their restrictions. By 1963, thousands of carloads of Maine potatoes were moving to Portugal and Italy.

The MDA also carries on a project that, according to Mr. Hawes, "more States should be utilizing"—distribution of promotional films to overseas libraries and embassies. The some 800 prints on 15 different aspects of Maine agriculture that are now in circulation, some in Spanish—originally made for use in the United States—get more than 1,000 showings on public service television a year, plus a larger number before adult groups and school children. One of the most popular is a film on how to barbecue chickens.

MDA, whenever funds permit, participates in trade fairs overseas. In 1962, the State promoted McIntosh and Golden Delicious apples at the Amsterdam Exhibition, and in 1964, exhibited a range of foods at the U.S. Processed Foods Show held at the London Trade Center. In January 1966, the MDA will participate at the Milan, Italy, Trade Center, exhibiting seed and table potatoes and some frozen foods.

Bigger promotional funds

In the spring of this year the Maine Legislature made available additional funds to permit wider representation at trade fair and trade center events, as well as for more on-the-spot market analyses such as that conducted by an MDA specialist in Western Europe earlier in the year.

Another area to receive increased emphasis in MDA's work is studying ways to reduce the high shipping costs for Maine agricultural products, most of which do not move out of local ports.

"Since the 1920's when Maine lost its position as a major shipping port, our products have met sharp price competition from those of other countries, particularly Canada's," Mr. Hawes said. "The only way to improve the situation is to build up a sizable export trade so that Atlantic shipping lines can see the potential for Maine farm products and will change their rate schedules to accommodate them. At the moment, MDA is doing all it can to utilize reefer space in ships that are now carrying forest products out of Maine."

Consumer education needed

New Uses for Rice in U.K. Could Boost Consumption and U.S. Exports

By TURNER L. OYLOE
Assistant U.S. Agricultural Attaché
London, England

Ten years ago American rice was practically unknown to the British housewife. Today, approximately 40 percent of the total rice consumed in the United Kingdom is grown on American farms. What changes have occurred in the last 10 years to bring American rice into such a predominant position and what does the future hold for it?

A combination of a high-quality product and effective market development activities, together with growing affluence, has expanded U.S. exports of rice to the United Kingdom. Last year's purchases of 34,000 metric tons made the United Kingdom this country's fifth biggest customer.

Past success, however, should not blind us to present realities. Increased American rice sales will be dependent upon meeting growing competition from other suppliers, overcoming the reluctance of consumers to utilize rice in lieu of other vegetables, principally potatoes, and demonstrating continuously to all sections of the trade the high qualities of our product. A well-designed program of market development can go far in overcoming these obstacles.

Rice pudding has been the traditional way in which the British housewife prepared rice for her family. The U.S. Rice Export Development Association, Inc. (now the Rice Council for Market Development), in conjunction with FAS has, therefore, put major emphasis since 1961 on introducing consumers to the many and varied ways in which rice can be used in planning wholesome meals.

This program of rice education rolled into high gear in early 1962, and was so successful that by the following year, the British Ministry of Education had included rice cookery in the school system's curriculum.

Demonstrations of rice cookery have also been a mainstay in almost every food fair and in-store promotion carried out by the FAS in the United Kingdom in the past few years.

The effectiveness of this program of introducing rice as a substitute for vegetables in the family diet was demonstrated in 1962 when a shortage of potatoes pushed per capita rice consumption from the 2.9 pounds of a year earlier to 3.4 pounds.

The U.K. consumer in recent years has favored U.S. rice primarily because it is a high-quality product.

In the past, rice purchased from other sources demanded a great deal of preparation time including a number of washings to insure cleanliness. The U.S. Rice Council in its market development activities stressed the ease of preparation of American rice which is an important factor to the busy British housewife. With a growing level of affluence, the British housewife is willing to pay the small extra cost of American rice to obtain a high uniform quality.

Quality and a positive market development program have been the major ingredients in the tremendous growth of American sales in the United Kingdom.

There appears to be little doubt that American rice sales in the future will face an uphill battle.

The most serious problem is that in recent years per capita consumption of rice has been lower than in prewar years. Prior to the Second World War, British per capita rice consumption was 4.4 pounds. By 1947, when food shortages were at their worst owing to the United Kingdom's postwar economic difficulties, consumption had fallen to only 0.2 pounds per head. Since that time, consumption has generally increased, but only at a very slow rate so that by 1963-64 per capita consumption was 3.1 pounds.

This failure of per capita consumption to recover has been reflected in smaller rice imports, which averaged 131,000 long tons in the 1937-39 period and have been running at just over 100,000 long tons during the last few years. The United States during the past 5 years was able to increase its share of this rather static market due to superior quality. However, other suppliers, due to American competitive pressure, are now upgrading their rice quality. Consequently, expansion in U.S. sales may not be as easy to achieve in the future.

There are three areas where the largest potential appears to be for expanding American rice sales:

Savoury dishes are twice as nice with
Uncle Ben's Rice
...it always cooks up light, white and separate
Guarantee perfect results every time
Uncle Ben's Rice

Part of the extensive promotion going on in Britain to introduce rice to consumers as a convenience food is this full-page ad, accompanied by four pages of recipes, in a top magazine.

- The potato shortage of 1962 indicated that the British consumer will use rice as a substitute for potatoes.
- The relatively low price of rice, its ease of preparation, and varied uses are the most important competitive tools available in expanding the use of rice as a convenience food. Two of the biggest food companies in Britain have introduced, with considerable success, a wide variety of packaged, already-seasoned rices, similar to those being successfully marketed in the United States.
- A growing market for rice has been in prepared breakfast foods, an area where consumption has been expanding at a very fast pace. All available information indicates the rice-based breakfast products are sharing in this expanding market.

There does not appear to be any question regarding the existence of a potential market for American rice in the United Kingdom. However, this potential will not be realized without a continuing program of education, as well as other promotion, directed at the consumer, and trade service to wholesalers and industrial users.

U.K. Butter and Cheese Imports Smaller

Imports of butter into the United Kingdom in the first 9 months of 1965 totaled 695 million pounds, down 7 percent from the comparable period of 1964.

Shipments from New Zealand, the principal supplier, declined 4 percent to 262 million pounds. Imports from Australia, at 102 million pounds, were also below the 110 million pounds of a year ago.

Arrivals from Denmark increased to 164 million pounds from 154 million. Among other countries shipping larger quantities in 1965 were the Netherlands, 32 million pounds compared with 24 million, and Ireland, 31 million compared with 28 million. There were marked reductions in receipts from Finland, Poland, France, Sweden, and Argentina.

Cheese imports, at 225 million pounds, were 10 million pounds below those of a year ago. A decline in shipments from New Zealand—121 million pounds compared with 141 million—and Canada—13 million compared with 16 million—outweighed increases in shipments from other principal suppliers, namely Australia, the Netherlands, Denmark and France.

Dutch Canned Milk Exports Down

Canned milk exports from the Netherlands during the first 8 months of 1965 totaled 463 million pounds, a decrease of 10 percent from the 515 million pounds shipped in the same months of 1964.

Smaller sales to several important markets in Asia—which takes about half of total Dutch canned milk shipments—accounted for most of this decline. Among the countries making much smaller purchases were the Philippine Republic, which took only 16 million pounds compared with 62 million last year; Malaysia, 34 million (44 million); and Thailand, 63 million (70 million). Sales to Burma, at 42 million pounds, exceeded those of January-August 1964 by 37 percent. Shipments to Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Aden increased moderately.

Among West European countries, only West Germany increased its purchases over last year, taking 10 million pounds compared with 1 million.

Somewhat larger shipments to Morocco, Tanzania, Libya, and Senegal raised overall exports to Africa slightly above the 1964 level.

Thailand Imports and Uses More Cotton in 1964-65

Thailand's cotton textile industry has expanded rapidly in recent years—a period of rising prosperity. Consequently, the demand for raw cotton has strengthened significantly.

In August-June 1964-65, Thailand imported 78,000 bales (480 lb. net) of cotton, compared with 40,000 bales in the same period of 1963-64. During the 1964-65 period, the United States supplied 52,000 bales or two-thirds of Thailand's cotton imports, compared with 32,000 bales in the first 11 months of 1963-64. No aid programs are in operation for Thailand. Most of the remaining imports during 1964-65 came from Brazil, Nicaragua, and Mexico.

Cotton consumption in 1964-65 totaled about 125,000 bales, 25 percent more than a year earlier. Thailand exports very little cotton yarn or textiles. Most yarn production is in the full range up to 40 count. All high-count yarns required by the industry are imported, mostly from Japan. Yarn imports in 1964 reached 5,872 metric tons, plus an additional 600 tons of thread. Imports of cotton piece goods in 1964 totaled well over 100 million square yards, with Japan by far the largest supplier.

Thailand reportedly has about 225,000 spindles in use, and this figure may increase to over 300,000 by the end of 1966. There are 13 mills in Thailand, 2 of which are government-owned. The Japanese have recently established a synthetic-fiber plant. This plant has 20,000 spindles and 200 looms.

With the increasing number of spindles, there has also been a shift to manufacture of higher count yarns. Since 1962, an import duty has been imposed on imported yarns up to 40 count. In August 1965, the law was amended to include yarns up to 46's, suggesting that in the future, Thailand may become less dependent on imported yarns of higher quality in the future.

Thailand produced 74,000 bales of cotton in 1964-65, compared with 61,000 in 1963-64 and less than 30,000 in the early 1950's.

Japan Announces Date Import Quota for Iraq

On November 17 the Japanese Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) announced an import quota for 8,500 metric tons of Iraqi dates (7,000 for syrup and alcohol and 1,500 for food) in the Japanese fiscal year 1965 (April 1965-March 1966). This compares with a quota of 10,000 metric tons in JFY 1964.

According to Japanese trade sources, current offer prices for Iraqi dates are as follows (in U.S. cents per pound, f.o.b. Iraq): For food, 9.4-10; for processing, 1.4. The freight rate from Iraq to Japan is 0.7 cent per pound.

Of the 10,000 metric tons allocated in JFY 1964, reportedly only about 5,000 metric tons were actually imported, owing to the small demand for dates. Although Japanese importers obtain import licenses for the full volume when import quotas are announced, they do not use them unless they can sell the entire volume. No penalties are involved when licenses are not used.

Of 1,500 metric tons allocated for food purposes in this year's quota, some importers predict actual imports of only 300-400 metric tons because Iraqi dates are not well accepted for food use in Japan. Nearly all the dates allocated for industrial uses are expected to be imported.

Greek Tobacco Exports Larger

Greek exports of unmanufactured tobacco in January-September 1965 totaled 84.9 million pounds—up 34 percent from the 63.5 million shipped in the first 9 months of 1964.

The United States remained the largest purchaser of Greek leaf tobacco this year, taking 22.3 million pounds. West Germany purchased 12.7 million, and the Soviet Union, 9 million. Other important markets were Poland

8.9 million, Italy 5.5 million, East Germany, 5.5 million, and Egypt 5 million.

GREEK EXPORTS OF TOBACCO

Destination	January-September		
	1963	1964	1965
	1,000 pounds	*1,000 pounds*	*1,000 pounds*
United States	29,178	19,778	22,313
Germany, West	6,717	5,893	12,651
Soviet Union	7,895	6,235	9,044
Poland	2,405	5,139	8,943
Germany, East	1,162	977	5,576
Italy	4,416	7,147	5,547
Egypt	981	3,351	5,043
Czechoslovakia	2,326	2,269	2,040
Japan	---	13	1,795
France	---	825	1,619
Portugal	569	525	1,616
Israel	723	1,056	1,596
Switzerland	681	2,035	1,198
Others	7,247	8,268	5,910
Total	64,300	63,511	84,891

Tobacco Intelligence, London.

Philippine Copra and Coconut Oil Exports Decrease

Registered exports of copra from the Philippine Republic during November totaled 71,793 long tons, compared with 86,472 tons in October and 85,808 in November 1964. Coconut oil exports totaled 18,300 tons, as against 21,816 in October and 24,387 last November.

Combined exports of copra and coconut oil during the first 11 months of the year totaled 676,306 tons, oil basis, a decrease of 1 percent from the 684,304 tons exported in January-November 1964.

The copra export price in mid-December was US$190 per short ton, c.i.f. Europe. Local buying prices were reported at 61-62 pesos per 100 kilograms (US$15.60 to US$15.86) resecada, basis Manila, and 60-65 pesos (US $15.34 to US$16.62) in producing areas.

PHILIPPINE REGISTERED EXPORTS OF COPRA AND COCONUT OIL

Country or continent of destination	1964 [1]	January-November	
		1964 [1]	1965 [1]
Copra:	*Long tons*	*Long tons*	*Long tons*
United States	231,215	209,380	236,489
Europe	518,988	485,888	447,999
South America	26,800	26,800	18,744
Japan	29,880	24,380	36,100
Other Asia	500	500	500
Middle East	140	140	1,500
Total	807,523	747,088	741,332
Coconut oil:			
United States	182,736	166,754	157,689
Europe	41,286	37,830	43,756
South Africa	2,251	1,584	409
Japan	99	---	---
Total	226,372	206,168	201,854

[1] Preliminary.

U.S. Olive Oil Imports Decline

Olive oil imports into the United States in January-October 1965, at 19,648 short tons, were one-third below the 29,549 tons imported in the corresponding period of 1964. Although there was a significant increase in imports of inedible oil, most of the oil was of the edible type.

The decline chiefly reflects sharply reduced availabilities from the 1964-65 outturns in Spain and Italy. Imports from Tunisia and Turkey, although relatively small, increased somewhat, thus partly offsetting the decline. Prices for Spanish olive oil (1-percent acidity, in drums, basis Spanish ports) averaged about $665 per metric ton during the period—one-sixth above the $570 of the corresponding period in 1964.

U.S. IMPORTS OF EDIBLE AND INEDIBLE OLIVE OIL

Type and country of origin	Average 1955-59	1963	1964 [1]	January-October	
				1964	1965 [1]
	Short tons	*Short tons*	*Short tons*	*Short tons*	*Short tons*
Edible:					
Algeria	706	---	---	---	---
Argentina	477	492	---	---	---
France	619	124	170	144	230
Greece	1,708	1,444	200	97	314
Italy	7,585	5,483	9,481	7,581	6,959
Lebanon	13	---	---	---	[2]
Morocco	613	---	---	---	---
Portugal	49	79	112	99	29
Spain	9,237	7,720	21,720	20,264	7,238
Tunisia	4,107	913	1,189	867	2,601
Turkey	1	114	473	341	1,449
Others	189	74	115	77	347
Total	25,304	16,443	33,460	29,470	19,167
Inedible:					
Algeria	18	164	---	---	---
Greece	10	87	---	---	125
Italy	7	24	---	---	---
Portugal	304	---	---	---	331
Spain	41	76	35	35	---
Tunisia	38	---	---	---	---
Others	18	---	44	44	25
Total	436	351	79	79	481
Total oil	25,740	16,794	33,539	29,549	19,648

[1] Preliminary. [2] Less than ½ ton.
U.S. Department of Commerce.

France Promises To Buy Niger's Exportable Peanuts

France again, as in recent years, has guaranteed to purchase almost all of Niger's peanut crop. According to a November 22 agreement, France will purchase 90,000 metric tons of shelled peanuts from Niger at 970 French francs (US$198) per ton c.a.f. French port, compared with a guaranteed price of 1,050 francs (US$214) last year.

As the 1965 crop is estimated at 115,000 tons, shelled—of which about 20,000 tons will be crushed for oil—the 90,000 tons is almost the total tonnage expected to be available for export.

If the crop is delivered regularly at French ports, a small rebate will be paid by France. This provision is explained by the fact that there is always considerable difficulty in getting the crop to ports because Nigeria's peanut crop, harvested at about the same time as that of Niger, clogs transportation facilities from Central Niger and northern Nigeria to the sea.

France's guarantee is important both to Niger's balance of trade (peanuts and related products represented 69 percent of Niger's total exports in 1964) and to the prosperity of the country's central agricultural region.

Malawi Introduces Sugar Production

Commercial sugar production has been started in Malawi with plantings in the Lower Shire River Estates. Reportedly, 4,000 acres will be planted by the end of 1966.

Sugarcane in Malawi must be grown under irrigation. About 1,500 acres were under irrigation by October 1965, another 1,100 will be irrigated by July 1966, and the remainder during November 1966.

Malawi has been importing sugar from Rhodesia, South Africa, and the United Kingdom.

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